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AUTHOR Spratling, Cassandra

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ABSTRACT

The growing proclivity of business leaders in some urban communities to become more deeply involved in the complex and politically volatile issue of school governance is assessed in this paper. The troubles facing Detroit public schools include a high dropout rate, illiteracy of graduates, and bad management of money and resources. In 1988, another tax hike was sought, and for the first time in 20 years, it was rejected by the Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce. As a result, business and other community leaders brought about a change in the system and the people running it. Four incumbents of the school board were ousted and replaced by candidates who were strongly supported by business leaders known as the HOPE team. Individual and group initiatives that influenced change are outlined in this paper; they include actions by the Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce, the Business Education Alliance, New Detroit, Inc., Group of Organized Detroiters for Quality Education, Metropolitan Affairs Corporation, Detroit Strategic Planning Project, Citizens Education Committee, and the Detroit Compact. Information on the Institute for Educational Leadership is appended. (RR)

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DETROIT BUSINESS LEADERSHIP AND EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

Occasional Paper #7

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DETROIT BUSINESS LEADERSHIP AND EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

Occasional Paper #7

Cassandra Spratling
Education Writer, *Detroit Free Press*

The Institute for Educational Leadership, Inc.
Edna McConnell Clark Foundation
May 1989

PREFACE

The Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) with the support of the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation is exploring the evolving relationship between the public schools and the business community. IEL has been particularly interested in examining the extent of business involvement with and commitment to resolving the complex issues pertaining to educational reform.

As we pursue these important issues, we want to share our information with interested parties from the worlds of business, education, and government.

The enclosed Occasional Paper #7, Detroit Business Leadership and Educational Change, a journalistic account by Cassandra Spratling of the Detroit Free Press, reflects the growing proclivity of business leaders to become more deeply involved in some urban communities in the complex and politically volatile issue of school governance.

This paper represents the seventh in a series of Occasional Papers on Business-Education Relationships which IEL has been disseminating nationally. We would welcome your reactions.

William S. Woodside
Former Chairman and
Chief Executive Officer
Primerica Corporation
Chairman, IEL Board of Directors

Michael D. Usdan
President
The Institute for Educational
Leadership

May 1989

DETROIT BUSINESS LEADERSHIP AND EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

It just made cents. And sense too.

Over the past couple of years, business leaders in metropolitan Detroit increasingly began to think about where their future workers would come from and how important it was for those workers to be smart and able to grasp and apply knowledge in the new high-tech, information-based global economy. As the demand for skilled workers is increasing, demographic data show that the number of workers is decreasing, and more of the available workers will be minorities.

As business leaders pondered this future, they were troubled by the products they saw coming out of the Detroit Public Schools, Michigan's largest school district. The district's own data showed that more than 40 percent of the students who entered ninth grade did not graduate four years later; some critics charged that the dropout rate was even higher. Among those who did graduate, employers found that far too many could not read, write or communicate well enough to succeed on the job or in college. All of this was happening despite the fact that for more than a decade Detroiters consistently approved additional tax dollars for their schools.

In addition, district officials did not appear to be managing the money well. The district faced a deficit estimated as high as $160 million. Students went without books for some classes. Buildings were in disrepair. Superintendent Arthur Jefferson warned that without more money schools would have to be closed, teachers would be laid off, and programs and services to students -- who were already being educationally shortchanged -- would have to be cut to eliminate the deficit as required by state law. Some school board members used district funds for such things as first-class, out-of-state travel and chauffeured cars. Most board members stopped taking advantage of such

luxuries only in the wake of public pressure. But, the dye had already been cast. Growing numbers of people were furious with what they saw happening, not the least of whom were business leaders concerned about where their future workers would come from.

So, in the fall of 1988, when administrators of the 185,000-pupil district asked for yet one more tax hike, the Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce did what it had not done in at least 20 years. Its board, representing 4,000 firms in metropolitan Detroit, voted against providing more money for Detroit schools. It also refused to support the renewal of the existing tax levy and a request to authorize the selling of $160 million in debt retirement bonds.

For months prior to taking this stance, business leaders had been working behind the scenes to bring about improvements in public education statewide. But the vote against Detroit's financial bail-out plan, widely reported in the media, was the first dramatic public action where the business community overtly manifested its dissatisfaction with the schools. This new public assertiveness was a critical factor in the election of four new members to the 11-member city school board.

Business leaders were not alone in demanding changes in the way schools were governed and improvements in what went on inside them. Their increasing activism coincided with the goals of religious, civic, and community leaders who were also eager to upgrade the system and the people running it.

The combined clout of these diverse leaders was evident in November, 1988. Voters emphatically rejected the request for more money, though they did approve renewing the existing levy. More importantly, Detroiters in an unprecedented move ousted four incumbents who were up for re-election to the city school board. In their place, they elected a team of candidates that was strongly supported by business leaders.

Elected were Frank Hayden, a government analyst for the City of Detroit Water and Sewerage Department; David Olmstead, an attorney; Lawrence Patrick, Jr., also an attorney; and Joseph Blanding, a research analyst for the United Auto Workers. Using the first letter of their last names -- Hayden, Olmstead and Patrick for Education-- they called themselves HOPE. Blanding joined the team later. All four men had extensive histories of working in their children's schools and in supporting public education throughout the district.

Unseating incumbents is no small feat in Detroit, a city where name recognition usually reassures reelection. Even more amazing, Patrick was elected despite being a Republican in a city where Democrats reign supreme, and Olmstead was elected even though he is white and represents a predominantly black district and his own three children attend private schools.

The Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce does not endorse candidates and, as such, took no public position on any of the candidates for the school board. However, HOPE's list of campaign contributors resembled a "who's-who" of metropolitan Detroit business leaders, and included James Aliber, chairman of the board of First Federal of Michigan; Dave Bing, head of Bing Steel; Frank Stella, president and chief executive officer of R.D. Stella Products Co., a restaurant, hotel and hospital equipment supplier; Robert Vlasic of Vlasic Foods; restaurateur Max Fisher, and a host of prominent attorneys, most notably Richard Van Dusen, who also happens to be chairman of the Chamber of Commerce.

"Business played a crucial role in our election," said Patrick who subsequently became President of the school board. "The business community made it clear that education was of vital importance to them and they provided leadership in helping to provide resources for our campaign." Patrick said at least half of the team's $100,000-plus campaign funds came directly or indirectly from business people.

Other business groups, such as the Chamber; the Booker T. Washington Business Association, a group of black business men and women; and New Detroit, Inc., a civic group established by business leaders in the late-1960s; held forums to enable the candidates to make their case. While the forums were open to all candidates, it was clear that the HOPE team -- sophisticated, enthusiastic and intelligent -- was a breath of fresh air to groups desperate for change.

"Many of our members were not really sure what the HOPE team was about," said Betty Pulliam, president of the 200-member Booker T. Washington Business Association. "But when they talked about their plans for improving the school district, getting it in shape financially and improving student achievement, well, they got a number of people excited who didn't even know what HOPE was all about. They were able to create an excitement about what they wanted to do."

Pulliam, president of the Payne Pulliam School of Business in Detroit, echoed the concern of other business leaders who welcomed change on the Detroit school board. "We depend on them to provide adequately educated employees so business has a big investment." Business people who live in Detroit had an even more personal stake. "Many of the people with businesses who live in the city are sending their children to private schools and we'd like to stop doing that," Pulliam said.

Why Business Took On the Schools

The business leadership began taking a closer look at the schools when education moved from a low priority to a top priority on polls of members' concerns, said Frank Smith, president of the Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber annually surveys its members about their attitudes and concerns. "Concern about the quality of the Detroit Public Schools went from nowhere to a position of prominence," Smith said. "Before about three years ago, when we asked our members about their concerns, they

would say jobs, unemployment, insurance costs, crime, the image of Detroit and the way it impacts their ability to recruit." He said they eventually began to realize that education affected all of these areas. "In fact, we were neglectful for not paying attention to the schools. We should have been a lot more alert in evaluating the quality of the product. Our members really see themselves as being purchasers of the products of the public education system." Besides, as he and others pointed out, it is difficult to recruit senior executives to a city with an inferior education system.

In response to the polls, the Detroit Chamber did several things. It expanded the role of its affiliate, the Business Education Alliance, which had existed since the early 1950s primarily to further the study of economic education. Its broader mission was to use business to help improve the schools by such means as encouraging school-business partnerships and helping the Detroit school district implement its own strategic plan for improvement.

Anne Sherwood, executive director of the Alliance, said the district's strategic plan turned out to be "a lot of words, but no action." Somehow the plan was not filtering down from the school district headquarters to the classrooms.

In May 1988, the Chamber also made education the major topic of discussion at its annual retreat on Mackinaw Island. State and national leaders spoke about the quality of schooling and better ways to fund schools. It was clear that their concerns about education were national and statewide, not limited solely to Detroit.

Concurrently, there was also growing concern throughout the state about funding inequities among districts in Michigan. School revenues come largely from local property taxes so the quality of education in Michigan depends heavily on where students live. At its December 1987 meeting, the Chamber decided to take a dramatic step. It would not support any additional money for schools in Detroit or anywhere else in the state for that matter until there was a sound plan in place for improving them.

In the meantime, Detroit school administrators put their financial recovery plan on the ballot in November, 1988. Late in September of 1988 the Chamber made its stronger position public. It held a press conference and announced that it would not support the recovery plan. Smith called the school board "inefficient and ineffective," and said they wouldn't know how to manage new money if it were given to them. Smith was quoted in the Detroit Free Press as saying, "There's very, very little support in the Chamber for additional funds for education. We're disappointed, frustrated and concerned about the lack of significant response to the needs of students. We are looking at the people accountable for that, and we're not happy."

E. Daniel Grady, vice-president of Michigan Bell and president of the Business Education Alliance was quoted as saying, "There is no business on Earth that could proceed with the 50 percent rejection rate as the Detroit schools have done."

Two weeks before the November election, New Detroit, Inc., the group founded by business leaders to improve the city after the riots of 1967, released a poll showing that voters opposed the schools bailout plan and disagreed with the way the school board was running the school system. New Detroit is funded totally by private corporations. More than 70 percent of the respondents said public high school graduates were not prepared for college or the workplace.

During 1988, S. Martin Taylor, who was then president of New Detroit, Inc., became an outspoken critic of the school board. New Detroit's opposition to the board probably had an even greater impact than the Chamber's on the broader community because the civic group has been more active in grassroots issues. Nothing in particular prompted him to speak out at that time, said Taylor who is now a vice-president with Detroit Edison and still actively concerned with public education. "It's impossible to say, 'why then?'" Taylor said. "I just felt it was time for someone to speak up. I think the people only needed someone or an organization to validate or support or legitimize their

own feelings. The people did not want to do anything to hurt the children. But the people also felt strongly that they did not want to support a tax increase until they were persuaded that the money would be properly used. In addition, people felt there needed to be a change in the board itself. The environment was just ripe."

Into that environment stepped the HOPE team.

Businesses Raise HOPE

The most important role the business community played in the election of the HOPE team was in giving them a forum to speak to other business leaders and helping to finance their campaign.

The team grew out of a coalition of business, labor, political and community people that was formed in the fall of 1987 to help improve the schools It was called GOOD--Group of Organized Detroiters for Quality Education. It was formed to unite many groups that were working to improve the schools, including the Detroit Federation of Teachers and a citizens group that worked unsuccessfully to recall the entire school board. The group decided it wasn't enough to complain about the current board. It had to attract voters with an impressive slate of candidates to oppose the incumbent board, according to Horace Sheffield, a long-time community activist and organizer of GOOD. They looked to their own membership and found Hayden, Olmstead and Patrick as likely and attractive prospects. They later asked Blanding, who was running independently, to join them.

Olmstead had already served on a state school board commission to examine ways to help equalize schools spending statewide. He happened to be a member of the Chamber of Commerce so he was sure to draw business support. And he was white, important to those voters for whom that still mattered. Opponents tried to make an issue of the fact that his own children were not in public schools. But Olmstead was able to impress upon

voters that he wanted to make the schools good enough for his children to attend, a theme that struck a chord with many city dwellers whose children were in private schools. Besides he had a well established history of working actively to improve public education.

Even before it became more fashionable, Frank Hayden was working in public schools, starting as an activist parent at his children's schools. He had years of experience working formally and informally with community groups on various projects to improve the city's education system. In fact, he had previously failed in an attempt to get elected to the school board. It was Hayden's idea that they run as a team. He appealed to the grassroots community people.

And then there was Patrick, another active and committed parent who had established himself as a leader in the parental movement to increase and improve the number of alternative schools in Detroit. When people looked and listened to him, they didn't seen a Reagan Republican with a history of attempts to reduce aid to education. They saw a smart, capable and confident "brother" committed to improving the schools. He appealed to middle-class Detroiters, black and white alike.

Joseph Blanding had also been defeated in a previous attempt to get a seat on the school board. He too had worked actively on district-wide school committees as well as being an active parent in his children's schools. The HOPE team asked Blanding, who works for the United Auto Workers, to join them because he had strong support from influential labor organizations in the city and shared the views of the HOPE slate.

Rev. William Ardrey, a pastor active in the schools, said when the four of them joined forces as the HOPE team, they had almost all the bases covered: liberal, conservative, business, labor, and community groups. "The only thing they didn't have was a preacher," Ardrey commented one day.

The team ran with a plan to improve the quality of schools by drastically reducing the system's bureaucracy and giving more power and authority to local school principals--concepts that are gaining popularity nationally. They also said they would not ask for more money until they had a plan in place to improve the schools. "Like any savvy political group they looked to see where they could find some believers," the Chamber's president Smith said.

In fact, according to the Chamber's Board chairman Van Dusen, business also looked to them. "I've had this feeling for years that unless we saw some marked improvement in the Detroit Public Schools, we were going to be in deep, deep trouble," Van Dusen said. "Not only in Detroit, but as a nation, we will not be doing very well if are we are not doing a good job of educating our young people." Van Dusen heard what HOPE was trying to do and he called Olmstead whom he knew through the Chamber as well as through one of his daughters. (Olmstead and one of Van Dusen's daughters are law partners.) "I got in touch with him and told him I was delighted he was running and asked how I could be helpful," Van Dusen said. "I eventually helped them raise money and gave them some credibility in the wider business community."

Specifically, Van Dusen helped organize a reception for the HOPE candidates at which he introduced them to key business leaders. He also wrote and contacted several of his business friends and told them he was giving $1,000 to the HOPE team. He urged them to match his contribution or to give as close to that amount as they possibly could. Many did.

"I think I helped create an impression in the business community that these guys were solid," Van Dusen said. "It seemed to me that if we did not take this opportunity to elect good people to the school board, it would be 10 years before we could get good people to offer themselves again. The previous school board was so much in need of

improvement that you had to ask yourself, "If we don't start to turn it around now how are we ever going to turn it around?"

Van Dusen said his law firm--Dickinson, Wright, Moon, Van Dusen and Freeman--had been in business in Detroit for many years. "I'd like to see it continue and prosper for a lot longer," he said. "Yet if we can't turn out a sufficiently educated group of young people so that the economy of Detroit can continue to be viable, we're in real trouble."

Former pro basketball star Dave Bing, who heads his own steel company, was one of those Van Dusen called. Bing, though, was already supportive because he knew and respected Patrick. "It's a hell of a burden and an additional cost when you have to educate your own employees" Bing said explaining his support of the HOPE team. "With business changing as rapidly as it is, and this being such a strong information and technical age we're going through, we can't get by with folks having an inferior education."

Other Business Initiatives

Even before the HOPE team was formed and the chamber became more vocal, there were other organizations which included prominent business people that were working to reform Detroit schools. Often their memberships overlapped. Perhaps the first was the Metropolitan Affairs Corporation (MAC), a private nonprofit consortium supported by business, industry, labor and government. Its purpose was to link private and public sectors together to resolve concerns common to all of southeastern Michigan, including such matters as transportation, taxation, unemployment and education. Another was the Detroit Strategic Planning Project begun in January of 1987 by business, civic, labor and community leaders to develop an action plan for moving the city into the 21st Century.

Restaurateur Chuck Muer heads the Education Committee of MAC, which in 1985 published a report called "Dialog for Change: Options for Restructuring K-12 Education." The report, among other things, called for increasing choice in public education, site-based management of schools, and competency tests for promotion and graduation. Muer, a former chairman of the Chamber and owner of 19 restaurants throughout the country, saw in the HOPE team a chance to begin to make some of those ideas a reality. He was one of their early business supporters. "I feel improving education is the single most important issue in almost any community, but certainly in Detroit in terms of ultimately solving all the actual and perceived problems. The bottom line is that until you have educated citizens, they won't have jobs and a successful climate will not be established." Muer said he is also a strong advocate of education because he believes education helps equalize opportunity. "Without adequate education the rich will continue to get richer, and the poor poorer."

As a businessman, Muer explains his financial and moral support of HOPE as follows: "There are two things business runs on. The most important is people. The second is the availability of capital. We need entry-level people and skilled professionals. In both cases, the public school system is critical."

The Education Committee of MAC sponsored a statewide conference on school choice in March 1989. Olmstead was one of the featured panelists.

Education was also one of the primary task forces of the Detroit Strategic Planning Project. The Education group was co-chaired by John E. Lobbia, Executive Vice-President of Detroit Edison and Howard F. Sims, chairman and chief executive officer of Sims-Varner & Associates, a major architectural firm in the city. They released a report in November 1987 that called for more preschool services, assurances of jobs or scholarships for Detroit students after graduation, empowering local school principals and teachers, more effective use of dollars spent for education, and better adult education

programs. In December 1987, the Detroit school board asked Sims and Comerica president Donald Mandich to co-chair an independent Citizens Education Committee (CEC) that would help make those ideas a reality. Both men agreed.

Both Lobbia and Sims were motivated to serve on the Strategic Planning Project by their belief in the importance of education to the future of their businesses in Detroit. Sims called it "enlightened self-interest. If we look at how the labor force will be constituted in the next 10, 20, 30 years, it is the people these schools are producing that business will have to rely on. We need to be sure these youngsters come out with the ability to perform on the job and in college. If not, the alternative is for business itself to be engaged in massive and costly retraining."

Lobbia agreed and noted that "the labor-base is changing from one dominated by white males to one dominated by minorities and females." "Beyond that, the overall economic vitality is largely a function of how well educated the people are," Lobbia said. "Not just educated so they can get a job, but educated so they can function as citizens in a full range of activities -- at the ballot box and in the wider community." These beliefs led Lobbia to support the HOPE team early on, providing both financial contributions and assisting in fund-raising. He said he also supported one of the incumbents, Mary Blackmon, who was unsuccessful in her bid for re-election. "HOPE candidates said we needed to change and the business community supported HOPE because they agreed. I was for people who said we've got to make a change."

Sims remained publicly neutral on the candidates for the school board because of his position as co-chair of the CEC. It was important for the CEC's leadership to remain independent and to work with whoever ended up on the board, he said. "Our job was to help the youngsters in the system, not incumbent board members or new board members. Our job was to help students."

The Detroit Compact

Late in November 1987 -- almost a year before the 1988 election -- Michigan Governor James Blanchard announced plans to establish a DETROIT COMPACT. Similar to the Boston Compact, it would be a mechanism for businesses to assure Detroit school graduates of jobs and/or scholarships. "Certainty of opportunity," was one of the key school-improvement tools called for in the education section of the Detroit Strategic Planning Project report which was also released in 1987. In exchange for job assurances, Detroit students would have to meet certain attendance and achievement standards and the schools would be required to help students meet those standards.

The plan, which grew out of the Michigan Department of Commerce, was to be a joint venture of state government, New Detroit, Inc., the school system and private industry. Its initial $600,000 startup money came from the state of Michigan and the Detroit Renaissance Foundation, the civic-business group that developed the strategic planning project. Early in 1988, the Business Education Alliance of the Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce took on the job of implementing and administering the Compact. James Vollman, formerly a consultant with the Michigan Department of Commerce, was named Executive Director of the Compact.

Vollman said that even though there are clear and obvious ties between the Chamber and the Compact, the latter as an organization remained neutral during the November election. The organizers of the Compact were committed to it regardless of the outcome of the election, he said. He acknowledged, however, that, the Compact and the HOPE team had several common interests, including local school empowerment and establishing performance objectives. Van Dusen, the chairman of the Chamber, also said it is easier to get businesses to join the Compact when they have confidence in the school board.

Business Polls Members

It was certainly clear that business did not have confidence in the board. In November 1988, on behalf of the Business Education Alliance, the Detroit office of the Michigan Education Department surveyed 3,000 members of the Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce and asked them to grade the Detroit schools. Eighty-two percent of the respondents gave the district a D or failing mark. Additionally, the businesses were asked to rank by order of importance the critical employability skills that Detroit students lack. The greatest shortcoming was the ability to read, followed by low attendance, motivation, oral communication skills, ability to write, follow rules/regulations and written instructions, math skills, acceptance of authority, and team work.

When asked in the survey to identify their most important employability concern, the most common response by Chamber members was the lack of motivation on the part of students.

Chamber Spells Out Quality

Chamber President Frank Smith said he believes business will continue to be active in schools in the coming years. There is evidence that he means business. In February, the Chamber held a press briefing to announce that it had developed an outline for what it expected from a quality school system. The Chamber called for a mandatory statewide curriculum. Currently, Michigan recommends what local districts should offer, but the only statewide curriculum requirement is a semester of civics. The Chamber's plan stopped short of detailing what should be included in the mandatory core curriculum, saying that should be left for educators to decide.

Other aspects of the Chamber's plan look very similar to the goals of the HOPE team: allow parents to choose--within a school district--which school their children will attend, give greater power to principals, improve discipline, and require individual schools and the district as a whole to report annually to the community on the progress they made toward improving achievement and reducing the dropout rate.

The increasingly global economy demands that businesses become more aggressive in demanding better schools, Smith said. "We operate in an international arena and our young people have to be prepared to compete in that," he said.

Summary

It is obvious that business was not singularly responsible for the election of the HOPE team nor for the defeat of the request for additional money for Detroit's schools. As John Burkhardt, Executive Director of the Citizens Education Committee, put it, "The people who voted, by and large, were not captains of industry."

Business, however, was clearly a part of a community-wide movement for changes in the way Detroit schools were being run and in who was running them. Business leaders were effective in making their positions known in the broader community, in helping to finance the campaigns of candidates they believed in, and in providing forums to introduce those candidates to their business associates and friends. They were motivated by concerns about the future of the city and the nation and the survival, in a real sense, of their own enterprises.

Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce Board Chairman Richard Van Dusen said prior to the candidacy of the HOPE slate, some business people had "thrown their hands up," in effect, given up on the city schools. HOPE made them look again. "Indeed, HOPE gave hope and encouragement to the business community."

ABOUT THE INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

The Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) has programs in more than 40 states and is unique among the organizations that are working for better schools. It is a Washington-based nonprofit organization dedicated to collaborative problem-solving strategies for education. IEL works at the national, state, and local levels to bring together resources and people from all sectors of society in a new coalition in support of essential change in schools. IEL works to develop the ideas, leadership, resources, and programs that will enable American education to meet today's challenges, and tomorrow's as well. IEL has four primary components that are the driving forces behind its work. These components are as follows.

1. **Coalition Building:** Strengthening Business Involvement in Education -- The strength and vitality of business can be traced directly to the quality of the education America's young people--and business's next generation of workers--receive in our schools. IEL forms the crucial link between the schools and the business community to establish dialogue that creates an understanding of the common interests of business and the schools. From its position as a knowledgeable but uniquely independent participant in school reform, IEL brings business and education together to strengthen both.

2. **Emerging Trends/Policy Issues:** Demographic Policy Center -- America's demographic changes are in evidence everywhere from maternity wards to advertising campaigns, but nowhere are the challenges of these changes more real or pressing than in America's schools. IEL's Demographic Policy Center, headed by nationally prominent demographic analyst Dr. Harold Hodgkinson, is working to generate greater awareness of the forces reshaping our society and to provide services that will make business and political as well as education leaders more responsive to changing needs.

3. **Leadership Development:** A Motivator for Informed and Pace-Setting Leadership -- IEL sponsors a variety of programs that serve to develop and promote leadership. IEL's Education Policy Fellowship Program gives mid-career professionals the opportunity to explore policy issues and to understand better how policy is influenced. In collaboration with the Education Commission of the States, IEL sponsors the State Education Policy Seminars Program which provides for the exchange of ideas and perspectives among key state-level political and educational policymakers. Through a variety of leadership development services to public school systems, IEL has a learning laboratory to work with school-based staff. IEL and the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, jointly sponsor the National LEADership Network and work in collaboration with the 51 LEAD centers across the U.S.--with principals, with superintendents, and with other school leaders--to promote leadership in schools.

4. **Governance** -- IEL's governance work focuses on all levels of education policy and management, with the emphasis on performance and action to help local education leaders sort out appropriate roles, responsibilities, and trade-offs. Currently, IEL is working through it School Board Effectiveness Program to develop leadership capabilities and is examining various aspects of local school boards to enhance their effectiveness as governing bodies. IEL's Teacher Working Conditions Project seeks to understand and address the work place conditions and issues which promote or impede teacher effectiveness in urban school systems. This project is part of the overall national effort to professionalize teaching and to gain greater commitment to excellence in learning.

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Program Associate, EWA

Jean Miller
Consultant

Jeannette M. Nash
Executive Assistant, Leadership Programs

Janice Hamilton Outtz
Associate Director, Center for Demographic Policy

John R. Rankin
Associate Director, EWA

Kyra Storojev
Program Associate, Local Improvement Programs

Mara Ueland
Executive Assistant, Leadership Programs

Michael D. Usdan
President

Lisa J. Walker
Director, Policy Resources

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Publications Department
IEL
1001 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Suite 310
Washington, D.C. 20036